



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

4 April 2005

ZZZ43481.E

Moldova and Russia: Whether a holder of Ukrainian citizenship, born in Tiraspol, could return to Tiraspol and acquire Russian citizenship (2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

No specific information on whether a holder of Ukrainian citizenship born in Tiraspol could return to Tiraspol and acquire Russian citizenship could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, the following information might be useful.

Tiraspol is the capital of the self-proclaimed republic of Transnistria or Dniestrian Moldovan Republic (DMR) (ICG 17 June 2004). In 1992, "[s]eparatist elements, assisted by Russian military forces in the area ... declared a "Transdniester Moldovan Republic" ... between the Dniester River and Ukraine. The [Moldovan] government does not control this region" (*Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004* 28 Feb. 2005). Transnistria has become a de facto Russian enclave between Moldova and Ukraine (Laval University 5 Dec. 2004).

However, no one has officially recognized the independence of the DMR, including Russia, which has stationed around 2,000 soldiers of the 14th Russian Army in Transnistria (ibid.) - 1,000 according to the minister of Foreign Affairs of Transnistria (*Le Courrier des Balkans* 6 Mar. 2005).

Transnistria's population is composed of around 600,000 inhabitants, mostly Russians, Ukrainians and Moldovans (ibid.). Another source indicated more precisely that 25 per cent of Transnistria's inhabitants are Russians, another 25 per cent are Ukrainians, while 40 per cent are Moldovans (Laval University 5 Dec. 2004).

Citizenship

A report stated that according to Moldovan law, all citizens of Transnistria are citizens of the Republic of Moldova, but that "large numbers have also been granted citizenship of the Russian Federation (possibly 80,000) and Ukraine (possibly 20,000)" (Gribincea and Grecu Oct. 2004). The International Crisis Group (ICG) added that people holding Moldovan citizenship (150,000) "by far outnumber Russian (60,000-80,000) and Ukrainian (about 20,000) citizens" (17 June 2004).

According to the ICG, the Transnistrian authorities have campaigned with Russian authorities for Russian citizenship to be granted to residents of Transnistria; despite the absence of a consulate in Transnistria, consular officials make "daily trips" there (17 June 2004). In another report, the ICG added that the majority of Transnistria's leaders are Russian citizens (ICG 12 Aug. 2003).

On 13 April 2000, a coalition of NGOs sent a letter to President Putin asking him to "accelerate the granting of Russian citizenship to Transnistrian residents - former residents of the former Soviet Union" (Chisinau Infotag 13 Apr. 2000). The Moldovan news agency Chisinau Infotag stated that people wishing to acquire Russian citizenship face unspecified but "numerous bureaucratic problems" (13 Apr. 2000).

The Transnistrian press agency Olvia-Press reported that there were problems with the procedures for acquiring Russian citizenship and with the opening of a Russian consulate in Transnistria (30 Aug. 2001). The president of Transnistria, Igor Smirnov, declared that Moldova was opposing the installation of a Ukrainian and Russian consulate on Transnistrian territory (Olvia-Press 30 Aug. 2001).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Chisinau Infotag. 13 April 2000. "Moldova: Dniester, Others Ask Putin for Citizenship." (FBIS-SOV-2000-0413 17 Apr. 2000/WNC).

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004. 28 February 2005. "Moldova." US Department of State, Washington, D.C.
<<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41697.htm>> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

Le Courrier des Balkans [Arcueil, France]. 6 March 2005. Jean-Arnault Dérens et Antoine Ageron. "Moldavie : les sécessionnistes de Transnistrie comptent toujours sur la Russie." <<http://balkans.eu.org/article5196.html>> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

Gribincea, Argentina and Mihai Grecu. October 2004. Writenet/UNHCR. "Moldova: Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment." <<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/txis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?CATEGORY=RSDCOI&id=418f804a4>> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

International Crisis Group (ICG). 17 June 2004. "Moldova: Regional Tensions Over Transdnistria." <<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2811&l=1>> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

_____. 12 August 2003. "Moldova: No Quick Fix." <http://www.crisisweb.org/library/documents/report_archive/A401086_12082003.pdf> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

Laval University. 5 December 2004. Jacques Leclerc. "Transnistrie (Moldavie)."
L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde.
<<http://www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/axl/EtatsNsouverains/Transnistrie.htm>> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2005]

Olvia-Press [Tiraspol]. 30 August 2001. "In Tiraspol, The DMR President Had a Meeting with Representatives of Public Associations and Political Parties."
<<http://www.olvia.idknet.com/news-30-08-1.htm>> [Accessed 31 Mar. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Centre for Protection of Human Rights in Transdniestrian Moldavian Republic, the Independent Institute of Law and Civil Society and the Independent Journalism Center [Chisinau] did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Citizenship Laws of the World [US Office of Personnel Management], ECOI.net, The Economist, Freedom House, Independent Journalism Center [Chisinau], The Official Site of the President of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, Olvia-Press, World News Connection.

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.